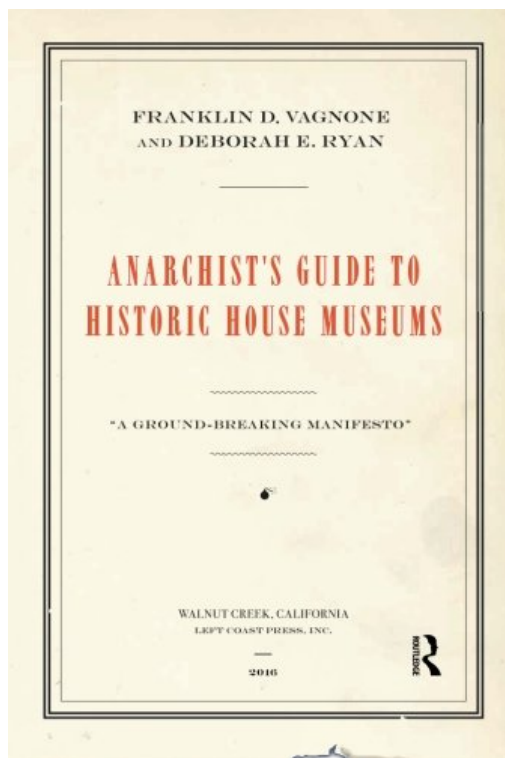


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Book Synopsis

In these days of an aging traditional audience, shrinking attendance, tightened budgets, increased competition, and exponential growth in new types of communication methods, America's house museums need to take bold steps and expand their overall purpose beyond those of the traditional museum. They need not only to engage the communities surrounding them, but also to collaborate with visitors on the type and quality of experience they provide. This book is a groundbreaking manifesto that calls for the establishment of a more inclusive, visitor-centered paradigm based on the shared experience of human habitation. It draws inspiration from film, theater, public art, and urban design to transform historic house museums while providing a how-to guide for making historic house museums sustainable, through five primary themes: communicating with the surrounding community, engaging the community, re-imagining the visitor experience, celebrating the detritus of human habitation, and acknowledging the illusion of the shelter's authenticity. Anarchist s Guide to Historic House Museums offers a wry, but informed, rule-breaking perspective from authors with years of experience and gives numerous vivid examples of both good and not-so-good practices from house museums in the U.S.